# The AMERICAN SPECTATOR

*A LITERARY NEWSPAPER*

*EDITED BY* GEORGE JEAN NATHAN ★ ERNEST BOYD ★ SHERWOOD ANDERSON
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## MOTION PICTURE CENSORSHIP

*by GEORGE JEAN NATHAN*

THE anti-censorship organizations have lately been making a beautiful noise about the threatened complete censorship of the motion pictures. The latter, they allege, will be fit only for juvenile half-wits when the scissors boys and girls, if they have their way, get through with them. An incipient art is to be hamstrung and squashed; free speech, the very foundation-stone of the Republic, is tottering; and so forth and so on. As a member of certain of these anti-censorship bodies and as one who, in almost all cases involving censorship, is ever ready to lend them his full and vigorous support, I nevertheless on this particular occasion privilege myself the pleasure not only of disagreeing with them, but of accompanying that disagreement with what, in the low vernacular, is known as the bird.

The current movie censorship drive, as everyone knows, is directed primarily against smut, with which the pictures in recent years have been brimming. Smut—and there is no other name for the thing the pictures have been retailing—is no part of any kind of art or even pseudo-art and its forced elimination should not concern any anti-censorship body with an ounce of intelligence left in its head. Furthermore, not *one* of the relatively better pictures made and released in the last fifteen years has in the least relied upon dirt, and these pictures, while here and there censored in an unimportant detail or two under the former dispensation, have still remained possible for adult consumption and more or less intelligent enjoyment. What is more, these pictures have been the screen's high-water marks and some of them have made big money. To name a few: "The House of Rothschild," "The Private Life of Henry VIII", "Arrowsmith", "I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang", "Two Arabian Knights", "Tabu", "The Big Parade", "Disraeli", "Hallelujah", "Journey's End", "All Quiet on the Western Front", "The Last Laugh", "Two Hearts in Waltz Time", the several René Clair pictures, "The Birth of a Nation", "The Guardsman", "Hell's Angels", "Abraham Lincoln", "Cavalcade", "The Covered Wagon", "Little Women", "Variety", "China Express", the various Chaplin films, "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse", etc. Still others such as "Ben Hur", "Way Down East", "Little Miss Marker", "The White Sister", "Smilin' Through", "The Champ", "Convention City", "The Thief of Bagdad", "Cimarron", the various Pickford films, "Skippy", etc., have been very successful and have been similarly uncensorable and uncensored save, in one or two instances, in negligible and entirely insignificant fragment. Furthermore, even under the strictest censorship, no films of any so-called educational or scientific value have been bowdlerized or damaged in the slightest, except perhaps one or two Bali or South Seas travelogues which have had a few feet of dark beauties' mammae cut out—and just where the great educational or intellectual value of amplitudinous bosoms lies, one has difficulty in making out.

The truth about the movies is that, in many cases, they have got to be so filthy that they do not in their present plight deserve the least consideration from any anti-censorship organization. As well let such organizations protest against the raiding of stag "smokers", prevention of the public sale of pornographic pink-backs, or the forbidding of promiscuous peep-shows. How the intelligence of a public is to be affronted and how its cultural rights are to be invalidated by eliminating from the movies scenes in which Mr. James Cagney pinches his old grandmother on the bottom, literary moments in which Mr. William Powell, surprised by an intruder while he and a lady are seated respectively on a water-closet and bidet, jocundly observes, "That's all right; we're only chatting", and episodes in which Miss Mae West sardonically employs her spacious backside in lieu of repartee, I should like the anti-censorship crusaders, including those with whom in other directions I am wholeheartedly affiliated, to explain to me.

Censorship, far from hurting the movies (save in the pocket), in the long run will doubtless improve them. No first-rate, honestly made, intelligent picture is likely to be much interfered with. A few unimportant little cuts, now and again, perhaps, on the part of the inevitable busybodies, but of small impairment. Cheap smut, cheap humor, cheap sex—these will be compulsorily weeded out. Imagination, invention, better writing and a general greater literacy will perforce have to take their places. The notion that intelligent adults—or even children who haven't been dropped on the head, for that matter—take an overwhelming delight in guano seems to be a notion shared only and equally by the movie executives and the anti-censorship committees.

But, say these anti-censorship committees, it is not only smut and cheap suggestiveness that the censorship advocates are driving against; they are driving against what they are pleased to call the general "immorality" of the films. That is, everything from illegitimate babies and godless gangsters to prolonged kisses and facile divorces, from too accessible bedrooms and too inviting haystacks to women's bare thighs and undulating rears. Therein, they contend, lies the danger. All well and good. It is quite possible, even probable, that the motion picture censorship will now and again be as ridiculous as most censorship becomes when it gets a few free drinks under its belt and goes on a rampage. But that is not the

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point at which we are trying to get. The point—and we repeat it for the stubbornly obtuse—is that this violent free-for-all censorship movement would never have got under way if it had not been for the smut in which the movies have permitted themselves gloriously to wallow. The smut started the ball rolling and gave the censors the necessary ground into which to dig their indignant—and properly indignant, if we do say so—toes. If it had not been for the smut, things would have gone on in the old, easy, humdrum censorship way, and with little or no damage to the films. But the pictures have now got what is coming to them. With certain honorable minor exceptions, they have given the public excrement in return for its entertainment money, and the excrement has been brought home and dripped on to the parlor rug and the nursery carpet, and has befouled the household. And not only the pictures themselves, but the way in which they have often advertised themselves in the newspapers and the way in which they have heralded their appearance by means of suggestive and often disgustingly lewd "trailers".

Let the anti-censorship bodies face the facts and meditate them. All of us are against censorship, but those of us with some little sense left may reflect that there is a whale of a difference between reputable literature, reputable drama and even reputable motion pictures on the one hand, and foul money-grubbing dung on the other. To fight in behalf of such stuff is to lose the whole fight against censorship.

# TOVARITCH SINCLAIR

*by HAROLD PREECE*

AFTER I had left the theological seminary, I removed the figure of the Nazarene from the niche above my bed and installed a carved image of Upton Sinclair. The light of faith, almost extinguished by sundry delvings into anthropology and economics, flared again into the white heat of rebellion. Chicago packing-house employees, begrimed with the filth of the slaughter-rooms, Colorado coal-miners defying injunctions and national blackguards, became my holy angels singing cosmic Internationales around the everlasting throne at Long Beach. Ardent neophyte, I visualized the time when I, too, might suffer for the faith and perhaps leave behind an Augustinian confession to inspire the unknown young novices who would take up the fight.

Alas! I once more walk in darkness without even the dehydrated assurance of a Unitarian intellectual. My Master, after years of agonizing contortion, has jumped a little bit too sprightly from the cross, and is now hobnobbing with those who drove the tacks into his shins. He whose words caused many a Jimmie Higgins to do and dare forgets the poor who heard him gladly, and casts lustful eyes toward the California Executive Mansion. The Devil has shown the earthly kingdom to the Messiah, and the Messiah has bitten like any rural aspirant for the constable's office. "Governor" Sinclair seems incomparably less impressive than "Comrade" Sinclair, the ex-deity's continued adherence to a milky Socialism notwithstanding.

Not that I am free from grave qualms of conscience. I know full well that I did not measure up unequivocally to the standards of the Master. When I first escorted a freckle-faced damsel to the haystack, I had grave misgivings regarding the purity of such a procedure. I recalled, in a sudden flash of decency, that Comrade Sinclair had fled the lascivious embraces of a siren who had tricked him into the woods. But when my temptress demanded to know what "we were waiting on," the flesh won a decisive victory over the spirit.

Sometime, afterward, the unholy potion distilled from corn first touched my lips. At the moment of quaffing my initial drink, I recalled Upton's stern prohibition regarding the use of intoxicants. When the fiery red-eye began to burn my insides, I wondered if the sensation was not that of my hepatic cells being eaten up, the condemnation which the Master had fixed for drunkards. Nor did I become entirely free from alarm until I had attended several other parties.

Playing God is undoubtedly a lonely task. Upton, perhaps weary of the venality of such young jackstraws as myself, quietly stepped from the throne and decided to be "just folks." The internecine contests among his disciples, various rebel groups buffeting and pillorying one another, probably sickened his vegetarian stomach. Then again, he might have retained his celestial attributes had the Socialist Party of California not nominated him for Governor a couple of times. It was too much like giving a taste of sirloin to a retired circus lion.

Had I not been fatuously blind, I might have noticed long ago that the toes of my idol were beginning to crumble. "Boston" was the last novel which most nearly suggested the early Upton Sinclair. Then began a dreary cycle of Mary J. Holmes *opera* bound in cloth, enlivened only by "Oil," which had the merit of being fairly well-written.

To me, it is a sad commentary upon Sinclair's deterioration that he was unable to grasp the significance of the events which followed the ebb of prosperity. The stock market crashed; hungry workers stormed city halls and relief stations; here was the proletarian revolution in the first throes of birth. But a man who had possessed undisputed intellectual sway over the American radical movement became suddenly impotent, clinging to a sterile parliamentarianism and expressing himself in the drooling gibberish of capitalist democracy. The paralysis which afflicted democracy as a political system afflicted Upton Sinclair as an individual writer. Henceforth, he could only repeat himself, and repeating at so much a word has been his later policy.

What is "Mountain City" but the afterbirth of "Oil?" One is tempted to think that Comrade Sinclair preserved the discarded pages from the manuscript of the latter novel and shipped them off to his tractable printer. The central character is a two-fisted oil operator whose beautiful and neglected wife, yearning for romance, runs off with another feller. The author, having purged himself of his youthful iniquities by writing an unconscionably dull book, thus made himself eligible for the unconscionably dull society of the intellectual bourgeoisie. There is a faint, very faint, flare of the old Upton in "Roman Holiday." But even in this rather mediocre production the germ of imitation is present. "Roman Holiday" is simply a feeble reminder of "They Call Me Carpenter."

At the same time that "Upton Sinclair Presents William Fox" was released for publication, Tom Mooney was rounding out another year in San Quentin, and the Imperial Valley massacres were maturing. But Comrade Sinclair found more emotional depth in the career of a former Hollywood magnate who had been caught napping. That Mr. Fox retired with several cool millions was irrelevant to his biographer. Comrade Sinclair thought it a damned shame that the perpetrator of innumerable Tom Mix atrocities should have lost according to the rules of his chosen game. As if in apology for glorifying an unhorsed captain of industry, the veteran propagandist revealed that Fox was once a Socialist. Perhaps the defection of his hero salves Sinclair's erratic conscience.

"American Outpost" is the most shameful mark of Upton's surrender. Here the old Communard boasts of associating with all sorts of phoney characters from the other side of the barricade. All that now remains for a man, who at times approached Gorky in his pity for the under-dog, are the shroud, the book, and the bell.

The younger writers who have identified themselves with the proletariat can no longer look to Upton Sinclair as a patron and friend. His demagogic barnstorming over the length of California may constitute an "Epic" in his own mind. To us, it is a pain in the neck!

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# ENGLISH NOVELISTS AND GRAVE-YARD SOIRÉES

*by JANE SPENCE SOUTHRON*

ENGLAND is producing too many novelists for its size and for its lack of diversity. Its literary soil would seem to have little nutriment left in it and to be in need of a good long rest; helped, perhaps, by drastic fertilization.

It is not so much the absence of literary giants that is so specially noteworthy; for, in that respect, England is by no means alone, at this epochal moment, among the writing nations. It is, rather, the sameness, dullness and timidity of the average literary output that calls attention to the evident poverty of the material available to the English novelist—that is, the novelist born and bred in Britain. Neatness, accuracy, academically unimpeachable technique, a decorously suburban and faintly titillating humor, a conventional inclusion of up-to-the-minute unconventionality of the fashionable and, therefore, uncensorable sort; served up with the never-to-be-forgotten sauce of "good form." Such the recipe. "The hungry sheep look up" and, their appetites not being apparently what they used to be, are constrained to swallow it. Whether they are fed is another matter. The diet, however, is too unsubstantial to make them retch.

Leaving aside the consideration of detective fiction, with which this survey is in no way concerned, there is, in ninety-eight per cent or thereabouts of the novels in question, nothing into which one can get a tooth; nothing that can be argued with satisfying intemperance; nothing that can give sheer, unmitigated joy, holy or the reverse. Two per cent is generous coverage for the few that mean anything vitally and which, therefore, lie almost wholly outside the scope of the present indictment. Many of the numerically larger class have, it must be conceded, highly decorative façades.

Without making invidious comparisons of an individual nature one can at least say that among the novels published within the last three years—within, even, the last six months—there have been some for which one has blissfully ignored hours and meals and foresworn sleep; but they were not by English writers. On the other hand, no recent work of English fiction has impelled one to hurl it through the window or at the porcelain. Most of them have merited approval in varying degrees; usually of a sectional kind. If they were historical, you could not trip them up on matters of fact or of presumable atmosphere; if contemporary, they were, to all appearance, written from the inside. The clothes, food, speech and actions of the characters were, as often as not, to use a useful trade term, sufficiently convincing. In many instances the characters were, recognizably, people; but people regimented by a too in-bred civilization and by closed-in and cramping physical boundaries. You were conscious, as you are, returning to England from wilder, more spacious lands, of a pocket-handkerchief landscape, too nicely groomed. The typical English novel of today, like the typical present day Englishman, is without vulgarity. Both are, in consequence, a little desiccated.

The last great English literary bounder was Bennett. Like Balzac, like Shakespeare, like Byron, he had no literary manners. His successors are perfect gentlemen—or ladies. But they cannot bound; neither are they great.

The literary in-breeding cannot, perhaps, be helped. "The Empire" gave English literary genius far-flung pasturage when it was most needed. The narrow, national barriers behind which "The Commonwealth" has shut it up may well account for much of the gutlessness that characterizes the greater part of today's English fiction.

A common mark of nearly all these novels is the want of youthfulness. It is not a matter of the author's years—some of the less resilient writers are barely out of their teens—but of the spiritual freshness that one looks for vainly. They are novels that are grown-up rather than adult; tiresomely, immaculately grown-up; and many of them have the didactic garrulousness that accompanies unadventurous and unimaginative middle-age. They have obsessions—and one of these deserves a court-martial to itself.

Publishing date, 1934. A story purporting to depict contemporary life; and still the War dragged in. Over and over; in book after book; the same old stuff. Even if there were new material, heretofore overlooked, it would pall. We are nauseated. But it never *is* new. First-book writers, for the most part young in years, are no better than the old stagers who cannot, even at this late day, tear themselves from doddering about among the stinking débris.

They do not mean it as propaganda; for which, in any event, it would be of no conceivable use. They have just not got disentangled; or they have, only now, with adolescent senility, made the portentous discovery—of 1914! Whichever it be, their vision is blocked. They can see neither past nor round nor through the gigantic, nightmarish obstruction.

To have been made or shattered by the War, John or Peter or Elizabeth or Who-not must, at the lowest computation, be a present day thirty-eight; which rules out youth as centre of the drama. By giving them a few more years a second generation—usually of sufferers—is sometimes got in. It is all so unnecessarily anachronistic. Live folk who happened to be around when the War was on—and who have retained their sanity—have forgotten it; have, in sober truth, lived several lives since then. Live young people know nothing about it; they are in a different dimension. The novelists, notwithstanding, keep sending out their ghoulish invitations to grave-yard soirées. Perhaps other novelists accept them.

A literary Statute of Limitations is cryingly needed.

# REQUIRED READING

"If there are no gentlemen but only civilized roughnecks in Germany, how can there be any honor, any honesty, any integrity, any trust in Germany? *The word 'gentleman' is not even in the German language.*"—Major Frank Pease in "What I Learned in Germany."

*Required Reading:* Muret-Sanders Enzyklopädisches Englisch-Deutsches and Deutsch-Englisches Wörterbuch. Berlin-Schöneberg: Langenscheidtsche Verlagsbuchhandlung.

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# THE PRISONER'S LAMENT

*by MARCIA PATTERSON*

THE glamour of single, but not necessarily celibate, blessedness dazzles my mental vision when, with imagination running riot, I think what it might be to be unmarried.

Having by elaborate parental supervision escaped the pleasures as well as the perils of pre-married freedom, I have, perhaps inaccurately, romantic impressions of the desirability of both. A halo of gay irresponsibility seems to me to encircle the heads of such of my friends as have escaped the blight of matrimony. They speak of children, if at all, with the light detachment I might evince in talking of the housing conditions of reptiles in the Jardin d'Acclimatation, or the doubtful value of proving to a gasping world that all Shakespeare's plays were written by Bacon. They never mention servants, moths, plumbers or other nuisances. They seem immune, in fact, to the plagues that beset and devastate the married. They appear young, smooth and unworried and cause me to reflect bitterly that they alone are the fortunate patrons of such luxuries as wrinkle creams, strawberry lotions, mange cures and muscle oils, so alluringly advertised and so fatal to conjugal harmony. They are not compelled to limit their nightly ablutions to the practical and uninspiring employment of soap and water by the hideous threat, "If you ever smear that sticky, evil-smelling grease on your face again, I shall definitely abandon shaving". They can even, so I hear, decide how many windows shall be open at night. They can buy such clothes as they know to be becoming and wear them with assurance and dignity, whereas the majority of wives I know slink about furtively in the sort of apparel their husbands consider suitable.

Having been caught early and trained well, I meekly forego the undeniable consolation offered by the Mesdames Arden, Gray and Rubinstein. I agree to leaving two windows open and two others closed, although I surreptitiously raise them all when I consider discovery unlikely. I purchase small hats when I long for large ones and I feel that through these sacrifices my price has become, even in these deflated days, far above rubies. But I revolt with passion and success from overshoes of any make or style. I have never worn them and if the rains descend and the floods come, even then I shall not wear them. They are to me the sign and symbol of my one remnant of independence.

Marriage has coupled me with a man who, without the condonation even of shares in the Goodyear or Firestone companies, has a staunch and loyal faith in rubbers. He puts them on in April and takes them off only when the season opens for arctic boots, and it irks him to go forth so adequately insulated when I splash along beside him in uncovered French pumps. Each large puddle is a heaven-sent opportunity and, remembering the hated diminutive hat I am wearing, I tread in it with irritable, and doubtless irritating vigor. Every deep rivulet in which I wallow with sensuous and vindictive malevolence repays me in part for the deficiency of fresh air in my room, and the clammy sogginess of my soaked stockings brings me a joy that balances many an hour of gloom due to the lack of opportunity to apply those unguent magics cruelly denied me. And surely the fates are on my side, for although I promptly succumbed to typhoid as the suggested climax to eating oysters out of season, and to appendicitis for refusing to negotiate with grape or other seeds, I am able year after year and storm after storm to render quite false all hopeful prognoses of pneumonia.

But lest one think that all the tribulations of wedlock can be overcome or forgotten in the simple satisfaction of annoying a rubbers-clad male by acquiring wet feet, let me disabuse her of such unfounded optimism. I cannot hoist my lowered spirits with that feeble tackle and I often think with envy of the fortunate spinsters who go out when they like and return when they feel so inclined; who are not greeted with questions, reproaches and laments. "I telephoned to the Hamptons and you weren't there and I rang up the Grosvenors and they hadn't seen you for a week. Where *have* you been?" and a chorus away up in the treble clef bleats, "Where did you went and what did you did?" Of course there are people who fairly yearn to tell where they went and what they did, but a diary will receive such confidences with laudable restraint in the way of advice, suspicion, and any effort to make one feel that one's place is most definitely in the home.

And only too often the home implies children. Old maids and bachelors can talk about them so beautifully and their theories regarding them, being untinctured with the poison of compromise, are so scientifically correct. They sympathize with the small angels perfectly, and as a matter of fact the darlings stand before them with beatific expressions and whisper "Yes, sir" and "Oh no, Miss Taylor", whereas when the little beasts belong to you their glances blaze with venomous fury and they hiss, "If I could be a mother for just *one* minute, I'd give you a big sock in the nose!" Perhaps the prospect or even the actuality of a sock in the nose in the strict privacy of the domestic hearth could be tolerated with no perceptible diminishing of morale, but to function in public *en famille* is a performance almost unendurable.

The smart appearance of single women traveling with their handsome luggage, flawless alike in color and in contour, with their well-pressed clothes and above all their splendid aloofness, ignites me to a flaming rebellion. What have I done that I deserve to stand ignominiously in the midst of a squalid welter of bulging hand-bags, bursting trunks, Walker-Gordon refrigerators, odds and ends of electric trains, velocipedes and perambulators, to say nothing of all the after-thoughts of masculine appurtenances that stubbornly refused to be squeezed into any one of the nineteen pieces of baggage, all too plainly ours? My humiliation has been witnessed by crowds on Pier 57 and by leering multitudes at other embarkation points. French travelers have commiserated me and in Italian stations I have shrunk from the pity in the eyes of loungers. Only in Switzerland, amid masses of Britons with their skis, their rugs, their skates, their hampers, their portable bath-tubs and wicker tea-baskets, have I felt myself no different from my fellows. And what was the crime that brought down on my bended head this accumulation of mortifications? I committed matrimony, a mistake made by hundreds of women daily and for which the brothers Grimm and old Hans Christian Andersen with their misleading "and they lived happily ever after" are inescapably responsible.

Nor are contemporary writers blameless in this regard. Even the realists, with Marie Stopes at their head, hold forth to their gullible readers the spurious hope of rapidly dwindling attentions on the part of husbands. On the strength of this fallacious precept thousands of innocent girls have gone to their doom. They have fled from the stifling control of their parents to the suffocating interest of a man whose sense of ownership, thinly disguised as one of protection, grows more clamorous each year. If, instead of the spate of books dealing with means and methods of holding husbands and thereby directly encouraging the false belief that there is a possibility of losing them, there could be a few plainly written and thoroughly illustrated volumes on such subjects as "How to look single though married", "How to listen without hearing", and "How to be loved but not needed", some relief for the wedded might yet come in our generation.

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*The Editors of The American Spectator, now that we have seen the nationalization of all gold and the nationalization of all silver, momentarily expect the nationalization of all socks.*

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# FACTS ABOUT FAUST

*by BRANCH CABELL*

So fallen is your estate, Sir, that your main function nowadays is to keep people away from the opera. "It is only 'Faust' to-night," they say. "Let's not go." And the person addressed will, as a rule, assent cheerfully enough, because—as a tenor rôle—you have become an unvalued antique, to the majority of us, a long while ago.

Tenors have not much in common with antiques, I admit, except that their legs are so rarely of the best period. And besides that, one does customarily feel, after the first act of "Faust," that while Mephistopheles was about the task of rejuvenating you, he might better have made a complete job of it, by restricting your waistline and abdomen, which retain still the majestic contours of sedate middle life. In fact, Sir, inasmuch as Gounod has so arranged matters that in your love-affair you have no rival except a contralto most unconvincingly dressed as a boy, one admits that Marguerite is not blessed with the happiest possible choice of seducers. . . . Yet does the facility with which she allows your entrance into her bedroom, within twenty-five minutes of your first meeting, rather strikingly justify her brother Valentine's last admonition at parting, to let men alone during his absence. He doubtless knew a bit more about Marguerite's past than we do. For one, I have not ever, quite, felt that she deserved the luxury of that uncommonly large and airy prison cell in the last act, in addition to a jailer so unsuspicious by nature as to accept her singing trios in the middle of the night as an affair of course. Most jailers would think this a phenomenon calling for prompt investigation.

All which musical criticism has led me some distance from my point, that to most of us, Dr. Faustus, you have become merely the tenor rôle in an opera of which we have grown more or less tired.

It seems an odd avatar for you who, living, termed yourself the demi-god of Heidelberg, *Philosophus Philosophorum,* the fountain of necromancers, astrologer, chiromancer, aëromancer, and pyromancer, along with yet other magniloquent titles; and by your contemporaries were described as a vagabond, an empty babbler, a mere fool, an infamous beast, a sodomite, and a cesspool of countless devils. But the truth about you, as about all of us, lies somewhere between a man's private notion of himself and the publicly expressed opinions of his neighbors as to the same topic.

We know that you were born, during the latter years of the fifteenth century, at Kundling (which is now Knittlingen) in Würtemburg; that you studied magic at Cracow in Poland; and that you by-and-by came to the newly opened University of Wittenberg, to take up, by a rather startling change, the study of divinity. You were not destined, however, to adorn the church. Instead (to every appearance, in the year of grace 1515) you made your well-known and supremely unclerical compact with Mephistopheles, whereby your soul was transferred to this fiend in exchange for twenty-four years of his services. Yet were you not incited to your bargain, it so happened, by the sight of a soprano in a blond wig, viewed through a strip of gauze. You were inflamed otherwise, by the scholar's more rarefied lust to acquire knowledge and still more knowledge. You desired to fathom, in one stinted human lifetime, all the secrets of heaven and earth, and of hell also.

You wanted knowledge. You desired, as do most of us, a sufficiency of fine food and sound wine and fair women; and your taste in humor was both crude and unbridled. But, for the most part, you made of your wretched Mephistopheles, throughout twenty-four years, an unresting combination of the schoolmaster, of the touring agency, and of the Queries and Answers column in a newspaper. One rather pities the poor devil; and suspects that, when the harsh term of his servitude was over, he retired to hell completely outworn. One is quite sure that he never again undertook the arduous task of damning a philosopher.

Meanwhile you acquired knowledge. You observed the cities and the customs of many men, making a grand tour of the planet in fifteen days, like an excessive Phineas Fogg, and yet later recombing the principal and most famous lands of the world, with particular attention to all public buildings which Baedeker, if granted this privilege thus early in earth's history, would most certainly have starred. The amenities of Paradise also you inspected "from the least distance whence all men whosoever are denied to come any nearer." The Garden of Eden was lighted upon this occasion, for your special convenience, by "a mighty clear strike of fire coming from heaven." It is not recorded how Mephistopheles secured this supernal act of politeness. You visited hell also, with what appears rather morbid haste. But, above all, you asked questions of Mephistopheles.

You asked him, for example, about Lucifer's first fall and the events leading thereunto; about how to interpret dreams; about predestination and pigeon training and the construction of an archangel's sword. You inquired about the several planets, and the true nature of fire, air, water, and earth, and all that which is contained in any one of them. You asked questions about comets and ghosts and salamanders. You likewise required Mephistopheles to tell you how to possess Helen of Troy, to remove superfluous hairs without shaving, to catch fish with your hands, to mine precious stones, to read the lost comedies of Terence and Plautus, to ride abroad on a beer barrel, to open locked doors, and to cut off a man's leg without giving him pain. You asked in the same breath for an explanation of thunder and for a reliable method to procure fresh fruits during the winter months. And the poor devil, Sir, had to answer every one of these questions, along with an endless number of yet other questions, at full length, day after day, for twenty-four years handrunning, or else bid you go to heaven.

So then did you acquire knowledge ruthlessly, until time released the tormented fiend from your eternal question-asking. He wrung your neck forthwith, in the year 1539, at Staufen in the Breisgau; dashed out your brains and your teeth; and flung down your mangled corpse, from a second story window, to a manure heap in the stable yard. One does not defend such extremities; but, upon the whole, one does understand them, provided that devils possess any least share of human nature. In fact, one rather admires the tenacity of Mephistopheles. No merely mortal being, no seraph, could have put up with your eternal question-asking for a whole twenty-four years. . . . At all events, Sir, thus ended your quest of universal knowledge —in a manure heap.

Well, and Christopher Marlowe fished you out of it, without ever grasping your true nature. For this Marlowe made of you a poet. He assumed as a plain matter of course that a philosopher's main interests must be vested in poetry and in Helen of Troy and in riotous living and in yet other unphilosophical exercises. He imagined that you desired mere supernatural powers and mere superhuman indulgences, thrusting into a mouth adapted only to question-asking a vast number of unprovable, if highly poetic, direct statements. It would never have occurred to you, for instance, to declare, "A sound magician is a demi-god"—not to you, who looked upon magic more practically, as a postgraduate course in one's education. And if ever you, Sir, had thought to inquire, "Was this the face that launched a thousand ships?" you would have gone on immediately to ask about their names, captains, commissariat arrangements, and tonnage.

Goethe, himself a bit of a pedant, understood you far better. Goethe quite clearly saw that you wanted to fathom, in one stinted human lifetime, all the secrets of heaven and earth, and of hell also. But, alas, Sir, it was Goethe who first involved you with that Margaret whom Gounod somewhat later gallicized into Marguerite, with the attendant necessity of making you a tenor who can sing

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the *"Salut demeure"* acceptably.

"What has Margaret to do with Faust?" asked Charles Lamb: and I do not think anybody has ever answered him. For one, I simply cannot imagine your perturbed embarrassment, Dr. Faustus, were you to learn that the world at large now remembers you as an elderly nincompoop who gave up his soul's salvation in order to seduce an underbred working-girl. It is not to be denied, in view of your sextuple achievements in the Sultan of Turkey's seraglio, that upon occasion you could distinguish yourself as a loose liver: yet were all such affairs but the *hors d'œuvres* in a continuous orgy of knowledge-guzzling. Mere women you took casually, even Helen. For at bottom you wanted only, let it be repeated, knowledge. So you got your knowledge, at the one possible if somewhat stiff price; and having got it, you carried off your unparalleled knowledge, triumphantly, to your manure heap. It was permitted you to reflect, in the same instant that Mephistopheles was dashing out your brains, that these were the best-stocked brains ever exercised by a descendant of Adam. You had found out the exact truth about everything.

In this way did you obtain too as happy an outcome for any human endeavor as a philosopher could reasonably expect. But to be made, willy-nilly, and without so much as a voice test, the tenor in an out-of-date opera, Sir, is an affliction well beyond reason. It is also a predicament for which no school of philosophy, in so far as I know, has suggested a cure.

# THE GENESIS OF A SOCIETY GIRL

*by PEGGY LE BOUTILLIER*

WHEN she is thirteen or fourteen she is sent to a fashionable boarding school. She was probably entered at birth. She goes eagerly: she looks forward to having her own horse, to being with her friends, and anticipates the thrill of room-mates and midnight feasts. She is curious and susceptible. The next four years mould any adolescent. In her case, they type her.

She slides into the pattern when she first arrives. She acquires a patter from the older girls: pash-pash; skip it; did you ever get a lemon?; life is a husk; very up-and-up. Cold cream becomes face grease; soap is bathtub gruel. However indifferent her opinions, she suddenly adores Princeton and despises Yale, or vice versa, and effusively decorates her books to that effect. This superficial conformity gives her confidence; she feels in the know.

If prestige among the girls is based on popularity, she concentrates on increasing her mail. She writes to family, friends, and even to distant relatives, signing with a current flippancy: possibly "Keep your nose clean, baby". She lives and eats mail. If the butter falls upright it means a letter. If she can pull a thread from someone's dress, that means another; so does a wish on a fallen eyelash; and sleeping in the moonlight three successive nights is infallible. As she grows more knowing, she endeavors to receive letters postmarked New Haven, Concord, Groton. She sticks snapshots of her boy friends along the dresser mirror, hangs prep-school banners over her bed, and produces pins, rings and charms that spin "I love you"—all supposedly donated by admirers. And she convincingly boasts of her success with the stag line.

She aims to lead. So if the school hero is a daredevil, she will do the silliest things just to put over one better. She will hide twenty smuggled magazines under the rug without ever reading them. After lights she will choke down four cans of sardines and two bags of peanuts at a sitting; or stuff the gramophone with towels and play it in bed until she falls asleep. To fake a temperature she will run down a freezing corridor naked. She will write copious personal notes in study hall, or flash a mirror in the teacher's eyes, when she would rather finish her composition. To make her classmates wide-eyed she comes to Latin unprepared—for a week. She will meet boys from neighboring schools on horseback rides or walks, and enthrall the stay-at-homes with tales of her adventures.

If it is the fashion to be upright and honorable, she will purge her drawers of makeup; patiently knit sweaters for all her friends; impressively read "Anthony Adverse", "Les Misérables", or any weighty tome. She will charm the teachers with her school spirit, and become the right arm of the House Mother. She will ooze tender guidance to the new girls, obey all rules with gusto, sing attentively in chapel and study conscientiously.

Her most delicious hours are spent exchanging confidences. And confidences cover sex, religion, and philosophy, with the same curiosity, intensity, and ignorance. She dons pajamas, smears cream on her face, paint on her nails, and with a Curlash in one hand and a tweezer in the other—she Confides. At home and at school sex is still tabu. What she knows has been gleaned from books, older sisters, and, unfortunately, her contemporaries. She probes its fearful, yet enticing, mysteries, dwells on the dirty side, wonders a lot about "the marriage night" and . . . suddenly the bell rings, barely leaving time to straighten out the room and jump into bed before the House Mother passes with her eternal "Are your windows open? Good night, girls".

A minute later she is back under the covers of her bosom friend, continuing the inquiries, rapturously describing her "great love", and silently munching crackers.

As a new girl, she finds herself in a world of "crushes". Everyone either is a crush or has a crush on someone else. She, too, picks a girl to adore, chooses her crush. She hawkeyes her pash, adoringly watches her play tennis, eat spinach, change shoes. She makes excuses to run errands, bring messages—anything to hang around. She dances with her to the gramophone and kisses her good night. The older girl slyly encourages this "public", which not only feeds her vanity but is a mark of prestige. This intense admiration may never become active, but it occupies the younger girl's mind, excites her emotions, and temporarily puts her on the wrong track.

She always relishes vacations. In winter they mean the big city, party clothes, boys, breakfast in bed and, maybe, a cruise to the West Indies. In summer they mean visits to all her friends, beach parties, horse shows, and little supervision at home. She marks off the weeks, days, hours and minutes on a calendar, and her conversation becomes a code of "Four days, five minutes, three and one-half seconds. Hooray". A million times she counts her Subscription Dances, checks her invited escorts, decides what theatres and movies she craves. She arrives home in hectic excitement, and with parental pride and generosity is petted and indulged far beyond her age. She goes tea-dancing unchaperoned. She is given a box to a hockey game, a permanent wave, a white bunny jacket.

Of course she loathes returning to school. The mere thought of rising at six-thirty, making her own bed, of studying, of going without detective stories, parties, and boys makes her boil. Once on the train with the rest of the school, however, she is appeased by the opportunity to recount, in colorful and extravagant language, her Who, When, and Where.

During the first school years her remarks may be prefaced with "When I'm a writer", "At the Sorbonne", "In my shop" Gradually they change to "When I'm a débutante", "At my wedding". The social atmosphere at home, constant perusal of the society columns, patronage of expensive shops, a taste of success with the stag line, the thrill of corsages and compliments have left their brand.

And she is caught in the wheels that grind out the society girl.

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# THE FETICH OF PSYCHOLOGY

*by JULIUS W. FRIEND*

TO those unacquainted with the actual accomplishments of psychology, the picture of this science must be that of a Great Enlightenment, the key to the knowledge of human nature. This vast hope that has been invested in psychology is explained by the success of natural science. If physics, chemistry and biology can discover the laws of the external world, presumably the same scientific method brought to bear on the internal or mental world should yield the answer to the constitution of mind. So much for the hope; the poor reality bears so little likeness to it that the exaltation of psychology would be a laughable affair were it not the source of limitless confusion and error.

Sometimes scientific or technical terms become a hindrance rather than a help to clear thinking. So with psychological terminology. As the word "psychology" is commonly employed today it re-states rather than clarifies a problem, but by seeming to explain it estops a true explanation. The triumph of Hitlerism attributed to the "psychology" of Germany is only an indirect way of saying that the Germans have accepted Hitlerism. The problem remains as to why Germany fell into this psychology. When this explanation is attempted, recourse must invariably be had to reasons which are not psychological, but logical. Similarly, in examining such phenomena as the Spanish bull-fight, it will not do to say that this particular form of conventionalized cruelty delights the Spanish because of their psychology. This is again a mere re-statement. Nor does it help much to assert, as Aldous Huxley asserts in a recent essay, that cruelty is a natural impulse. The important question remains as to why cruelty is sometimes rampant, sometimes absent, and above all why it takes the peculiar form that it does.

Thus the psychological explanation explains nothing. We do not get very far in understanding a state of mind by calling it a psychology. A landscape may be, as Amiel said, a state of mind but, even so, such a state of mind would still have to be examined in non-psychic terms such as trees, grass, rocks, etc. Unless we live in a nightmare world, the mind has some relevance to conditions which it does not create. It is a peculiar perversity to call these conditions mental and, of course, leaves them unexamined. A psychological fact by itself is nonsense; it must be a reaction to something else.

Truly scientific psychologists recognize this fact and attempt to account for psychological manifestations as responses to non-psychic situations. They do not commit the absurdity of trying to account for objective situations by their psychic reflections. They say that the moon causes our perception of the moon, not that our perception causes the moon. Certainly it must be granted that the mind does not always correctly comprehend a situation and consequently that we often act irrationally. But even if it be granted that actions always spring from irrational impulsive sources it should be plain that this is not the whole story and that the effect of such actions must in the long run be adequately logical for them to be continued. It is true that the stock market, for example, fluctuates from day to day according to the "psychology" of the buyers and sellers, *i.e.,* according to their beliefs—sometimes based on fact, sometimes on fancy. But it is also true that in the long run the course of the stock market must and does correspond to actual conditions.

In attending too exclusively to origins, we forget many determining factors. So much has been said about conditioning reflexes that we overlook the fact that a reflex non-sensically conditioned tends not to remain conditioned; there is a rationality, a relevance, to the conditioning of reflexes. Similarly with the "complex", the therapist must resort to plain reasoning or common sense to cure the patient. To dissociate ideas which do not belong together requires reasoning and not any mysterious new exorcism.

Yet the logical factor is continually veiled by the use of psychological terms.

Closely associated with the tendency to disregard rational factors is the tendency to assess or derive values from psychological facts. We have here a variant of the fallacy of historicism—the belief that anything is evaluated by its origin. The fact that a flower grew in a dung-heap does not make it more or less beautiful; romantic love is neither elevated nor belittled when attention is called to its animal origin. Origins do not affect values. Two and two are four whether declared to be so by an Einstein or a lunatic. Whether one stumbles over a gold mine or finds it after deliberate research does not alter the assay of the ore. Alexander the Great may have been, as some historians aver, a great intellect, or as others aver, a wine-sodden lunatic; these questions cannot affect the fact that through his campaigns the Hellenic idea was disseminated in Asia. Thus we are served with unreason when the attempt is made to evaluate accomplishments by a search into the emotional or chance elements through which they may have originated.

Yet judgments are continually drawn from psychological facts.

Take the use of the word "abnormal". If abnormal means anything exact, it means a departure from a certain standard and as such is a fact neutral to value. The departure from a standard may be either a good thing or a bad thing. It is presumably a good thing that Leonardo da Vinci and Alexander Pope were abnormal; it is presumably a bad thing that Dillinger was and Al Capone is abnormal. But the good or the evil is to be measured in terms not of abnormality but in terms of the effects of abnormality. To draw the conclusion that all abnormality should be obliterated, where possible, would be a totally illogical inference. Should abnormality be discouraged? Sir Isaac Newton was a markedly abnormal person. He was tied to his mother's apron strings, *i.e.,* he suffered from an Oedipus complex. He would not run around and play with the other boys and so he was an introvert. No matter what other abnormal traits Newton may have possessed, his law of inverse squares held as true for a long time and is still true within limits.

It is, however, just as illogical to go to the other extreme and declare that abnormality is a good thing, explaining genius by a soft heel. What about the millions of introverts who live and die unremembered? Suppose we admit that Michelangelo was a homosexual. If this is more than an "interesting fact" and is meant to convey a causal relation to his genius, what of the thousands of mute inglorious inverts whose abnormality permits them to be barbers or stockbrokers? We are told that St. Augustine had a mother fixation complex and that Schopenhauer was a pessimist because of an unsatisfactory love life. Granted these facts, it should be plain that the truth or falsity or influence of what these men wrote is no whit affected thereby and that after all they are memorable for the value of their work.

Again we have lately had all sorts of social attitudes relegated to contumely by being called escapes or more grandiloquently the "psychology of escape". But surely escape may be sometimes a good thing. Most people would not hesitate to say that it is well to escape from a mad dog; at any rate the merit of such an act is allowable. If psychology were a thousand times better understood than it is, we should still be unable to draw social values from it.

So many rational problems in current life are obscured by psychological jargon that a few examples will have to serve. Let us first glance at the so-called psychology of advertising. The advertisements writer is an expert in the art of misdirection; at best he is a special pleader. Does it take any science of the human mind to tell us that insufficient and false evidence leads to fallacious conclusions? If so, then the science of psychology must be at least ten thousand years old. Advertisements can be reduced to syllogisms in which the premises are generally false, so that the often tacit deduction will be false also. It is plain that the appeal is made through rational and

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logical means, albeit ignorance is availed of to falsify the premises. For instance:

The socially elect are buying cheap automobiles.
You can buy a cheap automobile.
Therefore, you are among the socially elect.

Science has worked wonders.
Our face cream is scientific.
Therefore, our face cream will work wonders.

It is hardly necessary to labor the point that the so-called conditioning of the public mind and the playing on emotions can only be accomplished when the public mind is convinced of the truth and reasonableness of advertising claims.

Unfortunately the mischief of confusing psychological with logical factors does not confine itself to advertising. It gets into the high places. We were told *ad nauseam* that the way to restore prosperity was through psychology. One was actually asked to believe that conditions could be improved by the resolution to believe them improved and that we should therefore all get together and believe. This is no less than saying that, since thirst is a "mental condition", not water necessarily but a change in mentality will allay it. It is so that the ostrich repulses his enemy by burying his head. One is almost ashamed of having to repeat the platitude that confidence follows from better conditions, logically enough, and does not precede or create better conditions. Prior to 1917 there used to be among the literati talk of a Russian psychology, a mysteriously ineradicable trait of the Russian people—mystical pessimistic defeatism. Today the psychology of the Russian people may be better described as an optimistic and stridently American progressivism. Have we no other way of explaining this change except by mouthing the word "psychology"?

# CHINESE JUNK

***by ART YUN***

*New York Correspondent Chinese Telegraphic News Agency*

TAKE it on the say-so of a son of China, no other pen-pusher has done so much to promote popular misconceptions of China in America as Sax Rohmer. Rohmer's success has inspired imitators whose popularity, though never equalling his, has further distorted Anglo-Saxon notions of the Chinese character and things Chinese. Organizations devoted to preaching interracial fellowship and goodwill have never troubled to expose the absurdities of such books as "Dr. Fu Manchu."

Chinese born and reared in the United States do not love opium, nor is the drug synonymous with Chinese character. In Chinatown no opium dens thrive; drug addicts are exceptional; yet these tales all bristle with opium—a drug over the importation of which China fought a war with England, and a drug that is not indigenous to China but was introduced to the country from abroad for commercial gain.

Nor are the Chinese persecutors of white women. The Chinese are less amorous than the whites. An American girl in Chinatown is much safer than her sister on Broadway. In a scientific study of Oriental crimes in California, Dr. Walter G. Beach, of Stanford University, discovered that San Francisco's Chinatown is one of the cleanest sex spots in the United States. He revealed that, for the period since 1900, when Barbary coast nostalgia was still in the air, only one-third of one per cent of all offenses in Chinatown were sexual ones. It is a record for a people whose women in the United States number but 14,000 to 60,000 men, because the immigration laws do not permit them to bring their wives from China.

The American press is not interested in any phase of Chinatown life except tong wars, opium raids, and dragon dance photographs at Chinese New Year's celebrations. A fanciful police tip is sufficient for reporters to spin out a whole column of Chinatown buncombe, which even responsible editors, noted for brutal accuracy, will readily pass and publish as fact. No Chinese have ever protested; none of their organizations or family tongs, which are respectable, has ever sued for libel. Among immigrant groups, the Chinese are distinguished for a lofty indifference to the fallacies concerning them. They have not waxed indignant at such films as "Tong War," "War Correspondent," or "The Bitter Tea of General Yen." Supinely they tolerate, and even aid, the idiotic sightseeing buses to their quarters. Thus does the public get its false impression.

This impression has congealed into a stereotype "chink" portrait that has become a golden stock-in-trade for the movie, newspaper, and fiction-manufacturing industries. If anything has been done to crack down on the picture and to stop the silly confusion of fact and fancy, it has been done not by Chinese but by shamefaced Americans from the churches, Y. M. C. A.'s, society-managed "China" clubs, and similar Rotarian bodies. I venture the opinion that if some wealthy tong family, or some of the American-born Chinese, who now constitute almost half the Chinatown population, would occasionally bring a libel suit against those who traffic with such constant impunity in slanders against their name and reputation, the comfortable bourgeois American would soon get a truer and more authentic picture of how his American-born Chinese brothers and sisters live, love and work.

The American Chinatowns are today ghosts of what they were a couple of generations ago. Yet the current Chinatowns penned by practising authors are caricatures of a vanished scene. The macabre adventures and rose-scented parlors of the eighties are dead, and a psychologically new Chinatown, alive with nationalist ideas, greets the passersby. This is particularly true of San Francisco—the mother of Chinatowns the world over. There, Chinese Babbitts have become modernized, despite obstacles. In a Rotarian way, they have been loyal to American democracy. Their Chambers of Commerce have subscribed to Liberty Loans. Their American-born sons have fought to "make the world safe for democracy." They have contributed to Mississippi Flood appeals, and participated in Community Chests, and yielded to the New Deal.

Fifty years have passed since Dennis Kearney uttered his cry, "The Chinese must go!" Steadily have the Chinese decreased in number since the Exclusion Act, and recent Angel Island figures reveal that three Chinese bid good-bye to the Golden Gate to every one who says "Hello, America!" The last census reveals that the Chinese population is 74,000, as compared to 138,000 Japanese in the United States. Of this Chinese population, scattered in virtually every town and city of the United States, 30,000 are today American-born citizens who have never visited China. Their eyes and skins are Oriental, but inside they are American. They are more familiar with the sayings of Jesus than with aphorisms of Confucius. They can sing the American anthem but do not even know whether China has a national anthem. They shake your hands and not their own in greeting. They go to beach parties and dance and play tennis. Alas, they also read *True Story* magazine, and worship Greta Garbo and Clark Gable.

Chinese who are here, and those who have been born here, make up a peaceful segment of the various racial groups in the United States. In their long period of stress and strain, they have made no agitation and conducted no propaganda in their attempted conquest of American hearts.

Today, the Chinese, largely through that quiet stoicism of

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character that pervades even the humblest of laundrymen, are winning respect and admiration. It was no less a person than a lowly Chinese servant, named Dean Lung, who inspired the Chinese chair at Columbia University, which contributes its distinguished scholarship to the nation's foremost metropolis. Lung was handy-man for General Horace Carpenter, one of the original forty-niners. General Carpenter was so impressed with the character of his servant and the civilization out of which his virtues sprang that he donated in 1901 one hundred thousand dollars for the Chinese chair, on condition that it be named in his honor—a condition which was accepted.

# MAGAZINE SCOUTING ABROAD

*by WILLIAM C. LENGEL*

*Associate Editor, Liberty Magazine*
*Former Associate Editor, Cosmopolitan Magazine*

*George Bernard Shaw.*—Wears high boots inside his pants' legs, the aforesaid pantaloons being too tight and of the variety we used to call jeans.

When I went to see him, he lived in a walk-up in Adelphi Terrace, across the street from James M. Barrie. Stairway barred by a gate at the second landing. A pull at a bell cord brought a slavey to look you over. I felt right at home. Just like a speakeasy.

He has since moved to Parliament Mansions, with swell marble halls, lifts and everything, with H. G. Wells and Countess Russell as his neighbors. American royalties!

Seldom sits down. Leans against a mantel-piece or ambles around the room. Always waiting for you to speak, so that he can come back with a wise-crack. Loves 'em.

I approached him to do an article. "Why," he niftied, "should I write articles when I can make so much more money writing plays?"

"Because, Mr. Shaw, you can't always be writing plays," I answered.

"Well, here is something for you," he said, "'The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism'."

The book, he explained, was the result of a letter from his sister-in-law. She wanted some arguments for a paper she was preparing for a woman's club. Shaw started to write her a letter, and the letter grew into a book.

He made a good hot sales talk, but no sale.

Another time, I offered him a dollar a word for a blurb on the educational value of modern fiction. This was during that period in American letters (1925-1926) when the country had gone pseudo-highbrow, having graduated from confessions in *True Story* magazine to the great biographical masterpieces of Emil Ludwig, *et al.* Ray Long wanted to counteract this pernicious trend. Shaw's reply, written on the back of a post-card bearing his photograph, was to the effect that he would not charge me a dollar a word to tell me that modern fiction was hopeless and not worth the reading.

*George Moore.*—A waxen effigy. A wraith. An ectoplasmic emanation. The house at 23 Ebury Street. Moore was certain, in 1926, that England was going to the dogs, and he had invested his funds in U. S. Government bonds. He asked me if Mr. Hearst would not like to buy his famous painting by Manet. Mr. Hearst wouldn't and didn't.

I told him how greatly I admired "Evelyn Innes." He was furious. A book he never should have written, he insisted.

He had just turned seventy. I asked him to write an article on what he felt he had gained and what he felt he might have lost in life by remaining a bachelor. The way his face showed pleasurable animation! "That, Mr. Lengel, would not require an article.

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## FOUR CRITICAL NOTES

*by GEORGE JEAN NATHAN*

1.

A fine style consists in a fine mind filtered through the graces of the written word. Too much of what easily passes today for fine style consists merely in the graces of the written word filtered through utter hollowness and vacuity.

2.

Overly radical opinion in critical writing is sometimes simply a cloak wherewith the critic seeks to conceal from his readers, and often from himself, his temporary incompetence in perhaps sounder and more orthodox channels, his inability to make calm rationality interesting, and his passing mental staleness.

3.

It is the first duty and mark of the successful critic to be as sure of himself in public as he is now and then unsure of himself in private.

4.

It ever has been the common fallacy of immediate criticism to credit the pioneer and innovator in any form of art with high æsthetic virtues which subsequent calm, reflective criticism often finds he has been without.

R H
Random House Authors
FALL, 1934
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STEPHEN SPENDER
W. H. AUDEN
MAN RAY
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## SERVANTS OF GOD: No. 28

*Dispatch to the Home News:*

Orange, Texas.—Because a Methodist minister dared him, the Rev. C. E. Eskridge, pastor of the First Baptist Church, shouted "Whoops" and hurled his 200 pounds into the Sabine River. The Methodist followed suit. The preachers' antics nearly broke up a political rally which they were attending.

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That can be told in a very few words. I have not married because I prefer adultery to marriage."

*Ernest Hemingway.*—Expatriate (1925). Morose. Silent. Then voluble in sudden spurts. As meticulous in his search for the right word as Flaubert or George Moore. Despairingly exasperated with his work, then supremely confident. Writes to editors: "Submitted to be published as it is with no changes and no deletions."

Pouts when luck runs against him at roulette. Face ridged with old scars. Nicks them when he shaves. A bloody sight. Like many men who have or who cultivate a forbidding outward appearance, he is really gentle and considerate.

He was practically unknown to me, as was his work, when he was pointed out, a solitary and glum-looking figure, standing at the Ritz bar in Paris. My host, Basil Woon, newspaper correspondent, told me that he was a writer worth watching.

Woon introduced us, and asked Hemingway if it wasn't true that he had just finished a short story. Hemingway reluctantly said he had. He gave me a folded copy of the manuscript, but assured me that I probably wouldn't like it and probably wouldn't publish it.

The story was "Fifty Grand."

The history of that story—why it wasn't published in the *Cosmopolitan* and how it found its way into the pages of the *Atlantic Monthly,* of all places, has already been told.

It took me seven years to get another story from Hemingway. I had to chase him down to Key West and then spend a day deep-sea fishing among the Florida Keys. He was so fearful that I would succumb to my favorite weakness, *mal de mer,* and so glad that for some miraculous reason I didn't, that no doubt he gave me a story out of sheer relief.

Then again, the telephone calls, through which I followed him all over the country, may have had something to do with getting still another story. He wrote me from Cooke City, Montana: "Your God damned long-distance telephone calls get me spooked. Each time I think somebody is dead, or I'm indicted."

*H. G. Wells.*—Always seems to be wearing his Sunday best. Might easily be taken for the manager of Harrod's meat hall. One of the most unliterary-looking writers. He complained sourly that American magazine editors sought him out only after he had become famous, but had neglected him in the days of his early struggles. I pointed out that one editor, the late Charles Maclain, had the courage to publish his best novel—up to then, or since—"Tono Bungay," in the *Popular,* a pulp magazine!

*Arnold Bennett.*—Methodical, literary jumping-jack. You expected him to bounce. Let his moustache grow long to provide an awning for his protruding upper teeth, which he would swallow back into his mouth from time to time. A brilliant one-man literary machine.

A big gloomy house in Cadogan Square. Or perhaps it seemed gloomy because I always called on him at dusk while it was pouring rain. His study, a small room, hardly more than twelve feet square, with the usual coal fire glowing in the grate. On the mantel-piece a dainty clock which struck the hour with exasperated asperity. Five sharp, impatient, staccato tones and then a satisfied ticking at a job promptly and satisfactorily done.

Bennett was always obliging when it came to writing on commission. His price was two shillings a word. He pretended to no religion and I suggested that he write an article on his philosophy of life; in effect, what he had created for himself as a substitute for religion. It really meant doing little more that re-phrasing what he had already written in "How to Live on 24 Hours a Day."

"Now please understand," I cautioned him, with a sort of premonitory editorial fear, "we do not want an attack on religion."

Within a short while, the article came along. Sure enough, it was a sizzling attack on the shortcomings of orthodox religion.

I returned the manuscript, reminding him of our talk. Back it came promptly, demanding his two shillings a word as commissioned.

I sent him a check.

Now what to do? I had an expensive article on my hands which I knew could not be published in the *Cosmopolitan.* There are, of course, many manuscripts bought by every editor which are never published, but I didn't want this one charged against me.

Luck was with me. The London *Evening Standard* announced a forthcoming series of articles on religion by prominent authors. I called the editor on the 'phone and sold him the article by Bennett.

Then, as soon as it was published, Horatio Bottomley's *John Bull* launched an attack on Bennett, accusing him of breaking faith. It seems he had promised to write no more articles against religion.

I thought I was in for it. But Bennett never even mentioned the episode to me. He simply wrote *John Bull* that the article in the *Evening Standard* was one he had written at my request for publication in America; that I hadn't liked the job and "quite properly had disposed of it elsewhere."

Peace to a good sport among authors!

# MUSIC MORTALITY

***by GUSTAV KLEMM***

SCANNING the obituaries lavished on the recently deceased Master of the King's Musick, Sir Edward Elgar, we are impressed anew by the utter futility, the pathetic waste of much of musical composition. Elgar's journalistic mourners make smug assertion that if his music lives at all it will be in the masterly orchestral work, "Enigma Variations"; the oratorio, "Dream of Gerontius"; and, maybe, his Violin Concerto, now being fiddled about the country by Jascha Heifetz and Jehudi Menuhin. As for the man in the street, he knows of Elgar only the impressive trio of the "Pomp and Circumstance" March, No. 1, and the sentimental "Salut d'Amour," written by Sir Edward for his wife. These and no more are expected to live out of a lifetime of composing that produced symphonies, overtures, suites, *concerti,* tone-poems, songs, oratorios, chamber music—everything except operas. We aren't questioning the wisdom of the paper prophets; they are, in most cases, probably correct in their predictions. But a heavy sigh escapes us as we think of the vast bulk of Elgar's work that even now is being washed away by the busy waters of oblivion.

Any one who has tried to compose a simple little song or piano piece can appreciate something of the dreary despair that must seize upon a composer who lives, as did Elgar, to the venerable age of seventy-seven and finds only a pitiful handful of his carefully wrought works living on with him.

In this highly mechanized age, work has been made simpler for nearly everyone but the perspiring composer. His methods of working have remained the same since the first tune-writer carved something resembling a melody on a convenient slab of stone. The centuries have rolled on, bringing many marvels with them, but it is still not possible for the composer to drop a coin in a machine and receive a symphony or an opera in return. The only way to write such works is to buy reams upon reams of music paper, a pen and abundant ink and then sit, cat-like, in watchful waiting at the mouse-hole of inspiration. Days, months and years may go into this; only those who have actually written in the larger forms and endured the tremendous labor it entails, can fully appreciate what one gives to such musical work. And yet, even though there be magical pages

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in the music, music touched, perhaps, with the divine blessing of genius, it may live only a short day, turn sickly and die, for reasons never satisfactorily explained by anyone. One need only explore the Complete Works of any composer to emerge from these musicological explorations with a "Why?" as to the absolute unfamiliarity of dozens upon dozens of his compositions.

Is there any other profession, including the medical, in which the rate of mortality is so high? A cutter of tombstones may, in his old age, visit various cemeteries and sit amid gloomy but enduring monuments to his skill, monuments that will still be standing long after he has been placed beneath his own masterpiece. The composer's monuments are carved in water—or, to be more exact, ink; thousands upon thousands of eye-pulling black specks dotting mountains of manuscript paper. Although years of weary hours may have gone into their writing, they are of no value unless played or sung. They are sleeping princesses waiting patiently to be brought to life by the prince-like touch of great orchestras and singers.

Let us take a glance into a few of the mausoleums atop Parnassus. L'Abbé Liszt, a musical Belasco, managed, despite the draining duties of an extremely active life as pianist, conductor and propagandist, to turn out an amazing number of works. They flowed from him throughout his lifetime with an ease that produced a list of staggering proportions—orchestral works, fantasies, piano *concerti,* scores of piano and vocal *soli,* oratorios, cantatas. It takes almost four finely printed pages of Grove's dictionary to include them all. To Wagner, the Abbé was "the greatest musician of all times."

And yet, what do we hear of Liszt today? His "Hungarian Rhapsody", No. 2, and "Liebestraum" in A flat. Most of the rest of his works are deep in dust on the shelves of neglect.

Of Anton Rubinstein, a highly prolific composer whose superior skill in writing for his chosen instrument, the piano, is reflected in his symphonies, operas, chamber music, oratorios and songs, we hear only "Melody in F" and, occasionally, the cloister scene from "Kamennoi-Ostrow", a set of twenty-four "portraits for piano." His "Ocean Symphony" was a mighty musical monster that once reared its proud head in all of the world's leading concert halls. Time, however, slew this snorting dragon years ago and dragged it, tail first, into the cave of Oblivion, where the scaly beast rests comfortably on a bed of moth balls.

Dvórâk lives on in his "Humoresque" and the *Largo* from the "New World Symphony." Schubert is slowly but surely bogging down on his "Serenade" and the first movement of the "Unfinished Symphony," the latter of which may, thanks largely to "Blossom Time," be credited by future generations to Mr. Sigmund Romberg.

One wonder what the wheels of time, grinding exceeding fine, will do to the grist of Chopin. Aside from the piano recitals of a few professed Chopiniacs, little is heard of George Sand's indifferent lover. It is distressing even to contemplate a future that may offer no more of Chopin than his Valse in D flat and, for special and obvious occasions, the "Marche Funèbre" from his sonata in B flat minor. And what of Berlioz, that strange, tempestuous genius who once set the musical world on its head by the sheer originality, the architectonics of his path-breaking musical structures? When he bobs up today on concert programs, it is usually with his overture, "Le Carnaval Romain." Most of the rest of his *opera* have been gathered in by that grim reaper who wields with steady sweep his scythe in the fields of Parnassus. The facile Saint-Saëns, despite his many operas, orchestral suites, five piano *concerti,* symphonic poems and other highly polished musical ventures, bids fair to live on only in "Le Cygne," "Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix," and the clattering "Danse Macabre."

Of Johann Strauss, all we hear today are two waltzes, lovely enough but hardly a fair residue of his life's superb output in three-four time. Rossini, Rimsky-Korsakov, Verdi, Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn . . . those cursed with a touch of the macabre may, with the aid of a dictionary, continue this investigation into the mortality of music by great masters.

In the lighter fields, so-called, Victor Herbert presents a distressing spectacle. The composer of ambitiously conceived and executed orchestral suites, *concerti* and nearly a half-hundred operettas, he is known today chiefly as the man who wrote "Kiss Me Again." De Koven, a prolific contemporary of Herbert's, lives on in the melodies from one operetta, "Robin Hood." Sousa, equally prolific in turning out operettas, suites and marches, will parade down through the years under the banner of "The Stars and Stripes Forever."

Undoubtedly a vast amount of music that is written isn't worth the paper it covers. Much of it is "made music"; some of it is trash. We do contend, however, that the combined productive lifetimes of Schubert, Elgar, Herbert, Liszt, Dvórâk and dozens of others should leave behind them more than the scant handful of music representing them today.


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# FREE ADVICE TO THE REDS

*by FLOYD TILLERY*

COMRADES of the Communist Party—and of all other related organizations which feel called upon to assist God Almighty in His impossible business—I have some advice for you, gratis. And, that you may not turn at once a deaf ear to me, let me say in the very beginning that I am one of your poor whites. A poor Southern white. Let me declare unto you that I own no foot of land, no dollar of personal property, no mite of capital of any kind; and that I never will. I suppose I should confess that I do owe some money—I am afraid that I always shall until I die, when my capitalistic insurance policies shall square me with the capitalistic world. But I eat my meals off an oil-cloth, I sleep in my work-shirt, and I make the most practical daily use of post-season mail-order-house catalogues page by page.

I am a poor Southern white. And, despite such contradictory and discordant facts as that I am a native Alabaman and not a Democrat, that my spine titillates at the very mention of the name of Robert E. Lee, and that all my life, I have taken lynchings as much for granted as I have hog-killings, I do not think I am one whit better than any other human or animal being. I am that much of a pantheist, that much of a Christian, that much of a Communist. And, therefore, I think I am fully as capable of giving you some free advice as V. F. Calverton is, as Sidney Hook is, as Max Eastman, Earl Browder, James S. Allen and the other Cloistered Comrades are.

It may not be safe or sane or sound here in Alabama to do it, but, right lately, I have been reading a lot of "communistic literature" sent me, complimentary, from unknown sources up East. It has been interesting to read it all; but particularly interesting to read what the alien literary comrades have had to say about our own Camp Hill share-croppers, Tuscaloosa lynch-victims, and Scottsboro boys. So much of it is true—only we who live here, somewhat sensitive to the terrible stench of it, know how true. And so much of it is untrue—it is still deeply regrettable that the well-meaning outsiders continue to misunderstand so blindly, and so injuriously, the Negro and the Negro problem in the South.

The one thing, just now, which stands out clearest in my mind, after having read a great batch of this propaganda, is that the wholesale misconceptions and misunderstandings which the Communist Party entertains—and seemingly clings to—with regard to its categorical position on the Negro question are militantly sufficient to defeat for a long, long time—if not forever—the party's revolutionary program in the South.

You Communists, as I understand it, are hoping to fuse the Southern white share-cropper and the Southern Negro tenant farmer into a solid front to fight the Southern white landowner, and thus destroy capitalism in the South. "Labor with a white skin cannot emancipate itself where labor with a black skin is branded," you declare. That is a reasonable statement, we freely grant, and certainly a most attractive one for the ideologists and propagandists to use; but I tell you freely and frankly that this major hope of yours in its application to the Southern situation, is utterly impossible of achievement—unless, of course, you turn religious and prevail upon the capricious Creator to change His infallible, omniscient, and unalterable plans.

This is not to take issue, politically, with you as Communists; and it is not to say that your position on the Negro question is an incorrect one; but it is to suggest, at least, that some other way—another correct one, perhaps—will have to be devised before Communism will ever flourish below the Mason-Dixon line. Your program in this connection may work in the North and East, where the Lord has led two and a half million black men out of bondage; but Humanity, as He begrudgingly turned it loose in the Garden of Eden and finally let it overflow into the Valley of the Mississippi, where there are 9,500,000 Negroes and about the same number of whites, simply will not function according to the rules and regulations of such an atheistic ideology as conceived and propounded by the Communist Party.

II

Just a few quotations taken from the pile of pamphlets before me will convince anyone who understands the true situation how utterly impossible are the ways and means of Communism in the South, where the Negro is concerned:

"The Communist Party proposes to destroy the 'Solid South' . . . by establishing the fighting solidarity of the Negro and white toilers. . . . We will weld an unbreakable unity between white workers and Negro people in the fires of common struggle for their immediate interest. . . . The work in the South shows that even native white workers, once they understand how race prejudice is used by the bosses against the working class as a whole, actually organize and fight shoulder to shoulder with the Negro toilers."

"This basic contradiction (*re* land ownership) can only be solved in the course of an agrarian revolution in the Black Belt when the Negro farm tenants and poor white farmers will dislodge the white landowning class and take possession of the land and the farm stock and the tools. With these basic weapons in their hands, they will be able to set up their own government and obtain full liberation."

"Only by deeds can the white workers show that they have cast from them the filth of oppression and prejudice. They must wipe out all traces of the 'white superiority' idea in themselves and be the first to demand and fight for the special demands of the Negro people, for equal rights for Negroes, for full economic, social, and political equality."

Within hallooing distance of me are ten poor white share-croppers and twelve Negro tenant farmers living with their families on the mortgaged farms of eight white landowners. This has been the situation—or practically so—all my life. It is a typical Southern situation and it is the classical Camp Hill situation. Of course there are a few large farms. In my community there are two such, each containing several thousand acres which are worked by whites and blacks. But the point is this: the Southern white share-cropper and the Southern Negro tenant farmer, though they both are equally poor and oppressed, are infinitely farther apart, here in the South, than the well-known East-and-West ever were or shall be.

The one thing which the poor white Southerner clings to most tenaciously and most zealously is his Anglo-Saxon heritage. His white skin, his straight hair, his pure blood, and his social status are the four sacred things which he knows his oppressors cannot take away from him. They are the four things, too, which he holds in common with all Southern white men—the four things which he feels make him just as good as any man living, and "ten thousand times better than all the black bastards in the world put together."

Because he is poor and oppressed, because he is aware how very similar his economic status is to that of the Negro, and because he knows full well the danger involved in yielding one single inch of his social ground, the poor Southern white man is the most ardent and relentless "nigger hater" in the country. He is far more unjust, far more intolerant, and far more severe in his attitude and relations with the Negro than the average white landowner is. And the Southern Negro, in turn, stands in far greater fear of the poor white man than he does of the large landlords—pays him even more homage and respect, shows him far more servile consideration.

I have seen a group of Southern share-croppers strip a sixty-

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year-old Southern Negro "buck-necked" and beat him into a pulp trying to compel him to admit chicken thievery. I have seen a similar group take a helpless Negro woman into the woods and flog her unmercifully, trying in vain to compel her to tell where her son was hiding. I have seen my fellow-whites tie black men to hickory trees and lacerate their bodies with buggy whips and leather traces because the black men, drunk, had "cussed back" at the white men, intoxicated.

I have seen poor Southern whites gang together in towns on Saturdays and "knock damn niggers off'n the sidewalks, jes' for fun." I have seen my Southern comrades steal from Negroes with whom they were working side by side. I have seen them, while working for the white boss, cheat and defraud, of their own accord, Negro day laborers and Negro customers. And I have heard them plan to flog both "the poor white trash" and "the black sons o bitches" for gambling and associating together. I have heard them concoct lynching parties simply because a Negro had "acted sassy." All my life I have heard poor Southern whites—my fellowmen—boast of their desire for a race war in which they would "like to kill evvy damn nigger livin'."

III

I know exactly how intolerant, unmerciful, and antagonistic the poor Southern white is toward the Southern Negro—when anything pertaining to the race question is at stake, when there is any talk or necessity of "putting the nigger in his place and keeping him there." Attribute this to the fact that "from the moment of his birth, the child of a white worker in the South drinks in race prejudice"; attribute it to "the brutal system of persecution and tyranny created by the capitalistic class in the South"; attribute it "to the suppression of the credit and tenant system in the Black Belt"—or to anything else one may wish or please, the indisputable and terrible fact remains that it is so. And it therefore follows inevitably that such communistic propaganda as we have quoted cannot ever create "class solidarity" among the white and black workers of the South.

We Southerners live in a land of ignorance, and all men should know that ignorance breeds suspicion, fear, prejudice, tyrrany, hate, and blindness. The more ignorance, the more vermin.

In my community rattlesnake bones strung into amulets are still being used by Anglo-Saxon mothers to make teething easier for their lily-white babies; groups of stern Caucasian farmers still assemble in times of drought to pray for rain; ministers still preach to their congregations that the world is flat and does not revolve; newspaper editors—and the big-time ones at that—continue to proclaim the world-wide greatness of a scientist who accomplishes all his marvelous wonders "through divine inspiration alone"; and only recently the Man of God who preached the baccalaureate sermon at the State College near me felt the necessity of making an urgent plea to the several hundred educated and civilized young men and women graduates to give the Negro in the South a square deal and to treat him decently and honestly.

I believe the right Patrick Henry could come along and inspire the Southern white proletariat—for they constitute an overwhelming majority—to go forth to war with the imperious battle cry of "Give me liberty or give me death;" and I believe that the right John Brown could come along and actually liberate the Southern Negro. But any militant revolutionary force that is welded together, with the white share-cropper and the Negro tenant farmer as component parts, to combat the white man in the South will be as ineffectual toward bringing about the downfall of capitalism as an 1834 model flintlock would be toward bringing down a modern bombing-plane.

Take my advice, Communists: some other way!

# THE LAST MAN

*by THELMA MAXEY*

ON the evening of March 20th, 1932, while Shanghai was rocked by the reverberation of artillery and naval guns, three prominent visitors entered the editorial rooms of the Havas Press, the French news service: Monsieur Albert Londres, known in Paris as the Prince of Journalists, Mr. Lang-Willars, the well-known architect, and Lieutenant Victor Point, the explorer, who had reached Shanghai at the height of the Sino-Japanese hostilities after months of adventuring in Persia, Turkestan, Pamir, the Gobi desert and Mongolia.

Adventurers though they were, the gauntlet of patrols in the Jinkee Road, snipers, stray bullets and heavy artillery through which they made their way to the Laidlaw Building in the Szechuen Road, where much of the worst fighting took place, were not to be lightly overlooked—or would not have been by ordinary folk.

Bang! Bang! Boom! roared a big bertha as the elevator stopped at the fourth floor.

*"Zut!* What is all this noise about?" Albert Londres exclaimed brightly, as if he did not know a big naval gun when he heard it. He greeted Monsieur Barde and the half dozen editors and correspondents and chatted blithely for a time before divulging the information that three thousand Japanese were encircled at the Kiangwan Race Course and had been blown up, or burned alive, or something.

Editor Lupin, a vanquished Russian prince, who pounded a typewriter at a nearby desk, observed scathingly that "there was a limit to every joke." But Londres disagreed. *"We* live charmed lives," he said. "Let's have a party to prove it!"

"We can't prove it until the fighting is over," said Long-Willars, "but we'll do it then. You are, therefore, all of you, invited to my house at the dawning—or rather the dwindling—of that auspicious day."

The invitation was enthusiastically received by most, but Lupin declined, muttering something about "death feasts," and Chang-Y-Chu, head of the China Press and a former foreign Minister of the Hupei Government, excused himself with the plea that "on the day the hostilities cease, he, as well as the Japanese, would be in mourning for thousands of his countrymen."

"Superstitious savages!" the others jeered.

Bang! Bang! Boom! the big berthas mocked.

* * *

On April 12th, Lang-Willars gave his party. Besides himself and his wife there were seven guests. The party was a success. But the success was overshadowed when two days later one of the guests, a prominent French attorney, died of a violent attack of pneumonia.

Two days later the Shanghai French Consul General died on his way to Hong Kong of a sudden attack of small-pox. On the sixth day, Lieutenant Haardt, the Citroën Central Asia explorer, died of a sudden attack of pneumonia, and on the evening of April 19th, the Head of the French troops in Shanghai passed away following an attack of pneumonia.

The rest of the dinner party was composed of Mr. and Mrs. Lang-Willars, Albert Londres, Victor Point and Monsieur Barde.

Out in the Far East the populace, even those white people segregated in the foreign colonies, are less inclined to accept a statement on its face than most Westerners. They have made observations which do not quite lie down logically beside the formulas of white-man philosophy. True, rather than be ridiculed for the mental tar-brush acquired out there, they as a rule either refuse to discuss the matter, or dismiss it with a shrug. But in the innermost recesses

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of the heart there remains something which is a little bitter and more than a little contemptuous of those who presume to explain.

In May, following the Shanghai feast of blood, the Lang-Willars decided to make their annual journey to Paris. It was early for home-leave vacations, but conditions at Shanghai were difficult and, besides, Albert Londres was returning home. They booked passage on the ship *Georges Phillispar,* with Londres in the adjoining cabin, and sailed away from the dreary, shell-torn city on the mud-flats of the Yangtze.

Hong Kong, Singapore, Colombo, and they came at length to the shark-infested waters of the Gulf of Aden. Of the beauties and perils of these waters, Albert Londres had written a book only a year previously, and it was here that the ship *Georges Phillispar* caught fire from a boiler explosion and 250 passengers either perished in the flames or were devoured by sharks in the gulf!

Two of the few survivors were Mr. and Mrs. Lang-Willars. Of Monsieur Albert Londres no trace was found.

Heartsick and weary, the two went on to Marseilles, where they took a plane to Paris.

Gowodski had long been in the service of the air line, had been a war ace, and was a record-breaking pilot, but a day came when he made his last journey through the air. Half-way to Paris something happened, and from the débris of the crash the bodies of Mr. and Mrs. Lang-Willars were recovered.

"It is stupid," Monsieur Barde consoled himself to other members of the Shanghai editorial staff, as he marked streamer captions announcing the deaths of the Lang-Willars, "to believe that any designated group of people could for a month and more run a daily gamut of shell-fire as we did, and then die violently one by one because somebody made a silly remark. It is superstitious. However, I am glad there yet remains Victor Point besides myself."

Weeks passed. Victor Point led his expedition northward toward Europe. Daily he faced danger and death, head-hunters, jungles, bandits, and finally the barren desert of Arabia. But one day he brought his little group of men safely into Beirut, whence they departed for France.

Victor did not tarry long with the back-slappers in Paris. Although not yet thirty, this was not his first successful expedition, and soon he slipped away to Agay on the Riviera where Alice Cocéa was resting on her laurels from a successful season in a Paris musical show. Resting and waiting for him, Victor thought. She *was* resting and waiting, but not for him.

He should have known, for Alice was not the sort of woman most mothers would select for a daughter-in-law. It was common knowledge that her loves had been decidedly more numerous than her husbands, and of the latter there had been four.

One day after Victor had found a letter proving that some one other than himself was the second part of a *solitude à deux* aboard Alice's *Silver Crest,* he decided to follow her and do something about it. The yacht was rocking gently at anchor on the blue waters not far from shore. He pulled his little boat close. Alice came to the taff-rail; her lover's face peered from the port-hole of a cabin below. Victor stood up, drew a revolver, and placed the muzzle against his temple. "Try and forget this!" he shouted to Alice. There was an explosion; the little boat rocked perilously, a splash, and the body of Victor Point floated gruesomely in the Bay of Agay. . . .

* * *

That same day in Shanghai, Monsieur Barde with trembling fingers laid down the news cable from the Paris home-office. There was a panic-stricken look on his face. He tried to smile, but the result was an unconvincing effort. After a moment he said: "I'm not superstitious, but damn it all, it looks as if it is the 'last man's' turn now!"

# TO THE LADIES

*by ERNEST BOYD*

A RECENT anthology of women's humor has been pretty generally accepted as proving (*1*) that women have no humor and (*2*) that if they have any, it is not feminine. The mere rehearsal of these platitudes reminds one of the tired debates of yesteryear concerning the Rights of Woman and this Man-Made World. Fewer things stand more effectively to the credit of women than their utter boredom with the privileges, so called, of Emancipation. When men are emancipated, their incorrigible naïveté is such that they immediately proceed to exercise the rights which they are alleged to have wanted. Since the franchise has been extended, more people vote and fewer are represented than before. The once disfranchised man now a respectable voter, grows increasingly more powerless to register his opinions, so much so that, after a couple of generations, everybody is so uninterested that almost anyone with the talents of a saloon bouncer can rescind the sacred principle of representative government.

Women, however, are realists, and have quite naturally taken half the time to discover that the Rights of Women are totally valueless to them. There is a type of woman, happily growing rarer, who thinks that, when a man says women do not need to have intelligence, he means that he likes stupid women. This is the type of female who deserves to be enfranchised and emancipated; she knows no better. In the main, however, attractive women immediately get the point, and of such—if I may quote and paraphrase the Holy Scriptures—is the kingdom of femininity, as distinct from feminism. These women very promptly realized that clock-punching is as dull as any husband, that wage slavery is no better than domestic slavery. Above all, they realized very quickly that Women's Rights merely impose upon women the necessity of listening to the futile chatter of practical men and actually engaging in their childish pursuits.

As essentially practical people, women almost instantly recoiled from this prospect. They refused to go to the polls, or even if they went at the instance of some nagging or ingenuous male, they instinctively disdained all pretense of making what is called an intelligent choice, based upon serious conviction. That kind of idealism may be good enough for men, who must always have a romantic fiction to correspond to the harsh facts, but the sensitive, deep-seated, God-given cynicism of women makes such gestures impossible for them. It is one thing to argue about the sordid details of Spring cleaning with a charwoman, or to insist that, even if the refrigerator is being defrosted, there must be ice cubes for the cocktail hour, or to arrange with an underpaid seamstress to make a costume which no male eye can detect as not being the genuine Boué Soeurs article. It is quite another to listen to explanations of the difference between Tweedledum and Tweedledee, as expounded in male political conversation. What killed the Emancipation of Woman was the dreadful reality of "serious" masculine argumentation and debate. Even baby talk is more endurable to a really intelligent woman.

Another horrifying aspect of Women's Rights was the dreams associated therewith by romantic male feminists. One recalls the time when *ces dames* were assured that, once they had latchkeys, votes, and "sensible" clothes, sin and sorrow and pain would instantly be banished from the world. No woman could so violate her Mother Instinct as to countenance militarism and war. No woman would stand by and see her own sex exploited by wicked and rapacious men. Unfortunately the years since the franchise was finally extended to almost all women have witnessed the most horrible slaughter in history and the most ruthless destruction of human life and human liberty in every field. The only protests of any force against these things came from men who had been enfranchised and emancipated for generations, but who did not realize their utter powerlessness. Wise in their new-found freedom, women refrained from

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martyr-like self-indulgence. They noted the facts and quietly decided that it was much better to have no hand in public affairs and to continue, in the old-fashioned way, to allow men to imagine that a Woman's Influence would make all the difference in the world.

In brief, Women's Rights have the serious disadvantage of depriving women of both an alibi and a grievance, without which they could not cheerfully exist. It used to be said that the instinctive trade unionism of women was at the root of their hostility to ladies of easy virtue, the latter being scabs who undersold the market. On that subject we all seem to have somewhat modified our views. But on the subject of alibis, lovely woman still sticks to her principles, and not even the bait of Freedom, Emancipation, and Independence has succeeded in luring her away. She will not be trapped into conduct which inevitably involves her in responsibility for the general folly and stupidity of this Man-Made World. Take back your Rights, she seems to say; let who will make the nation's laws, so long as I make the privileges which best preserve in both sexes the illusions necessary to civilized life.

# THE BIGGEST SIN

*by* ***WALLING KEITH***

*Associate Editor, The Montgomery, Ala., Advertiser*

SISTER AIMEE, Billy Sunday and other first-rate Soul Salvagers may take credit for placing God's Help on a paying road-show basis, but native pride demands that I get all het up whenever I hear Yankee students of big time salvation-selling say that the Aimee Semple McPherson Huttons and the Billy Sundays are the originators of modern tabernacle ballyhoo.

There is, of course, the orthodox priesthood, which must be given some credit for the revivalist school of salvation. But in a discussion of the rise and fall of the three-ring circus one would not devote much time to the legitimate stage. The under-paid orthodox cleric has no place in this protest. He is a mere hack journeyman. The religious revival stager is a genius.

Long before Sister Aimee and Brother Billy had begun to realize that the Good Lord had blessed them with dramatic souls and business-like heads—indeed, long before any American racket had learned the secret of organization—the South, kindly assisted by the Lord, could boast of hundreds of Negro salvation whoopers whose talents far surpassed the soul-snatching, plate-passing gifts of the latter-day pitchmen priests.

The Black Belt has given to God's Open Road Work one or two white servants of exceptional merit. But most Southern white camp preachers either become orthodox churchmen and thereby lose the natural gifts of the Gypsy Prayer and Plate boys, or grab off healthy and capable widow women and retire to an easier life.

The truth is, most of the poor whites who hear The Call to Open Air Salvation Selling are neither dramatists, salesmen nor business operatives. They usually are red-necked boys from the clay hill regions, too lazy to till the poor dirt, too restless to tend store, and too devout to risk evil companionship in the barber schools in Birmingham, Memphis and Atlanta.

The real salvation artists of the South are black men from the cotton fields. Negroes who hear The Call to God's Work seem to possess that seventh sense of box-office appeal which their white brethren sorely lack.

Black preacher men have no more regard for or understanding of letters than have their white brothers-in-cloth. Their genius lies in denouncing the proper sins and selling salvation at a price in ratio to field wages.

Salvation can be had for the price of hog jowl. And Salvation, as served by the black preacher man, is no mere mark of Divine Forgiveness. That is pale stuff for the white folks, who neither appreciate the holy ecstasy of shouting His Name, nor the more sinful joys of backsliding with a quart of green corn juice.

Not that the whites do not get religion with a zeal. And not that the whites do not enjoy backsliding sins. They do. But white preacher men and white seekers of salvation merely go through the motions of Being Saved. They lack the fervor of the black people who shout His Name and join public confessional in a bedlam of "I sinned, but I'm gone to Glory! Amen! Praise God! My sins is washed away!"

"Sin," the preacher man will say, "is de chari-ut ob de debbil. You got to wash yo' sins away Glory, Glory, Glory!"

"Amen!" the flock will say, raising arms to God, washing their hearts clean, and shouting His Name.

"You got to praise God, praise God! You got to tawk wid de Lawd."

The flock will then praise God, once, twice, thrice, and launch into a conversation with the Lord.

Sin, the preacher man will say in so many words, covers a multitude of pleasures. But therein lies the secret of the black man's success in wholesale soul-saving. He does not dwell at length on the more pleasant sins. His flock prefers that he hand down blanket indictments against all sins, under the heading of De Debbil's Wuhk.

Adultery, while undeniably a sin of sorts, is forgiven the moment one gets Holy, a stage of sanctity requiring not more than five shouts of His Name and a generous sprinkling of Amens. Crap shooting and other forms of skinning are simpler sins. One may even seek and receive forgiveness in advance for a game contemplated on the morrow. This, of course, requires loud and elegant prayer in open meeting.

Drunkenness, fornication, gambling and mayhem, while not lauded by the black preacher man, occupy a second-rate position in the eyes of the preacher man's Lord.

"De main an' principal Sin, de biggest Sin," the black preacher man will say, *"is stinginess wid money needed in de Lawd's Wuhk!"*

## THE MAJESTY OF THE LAW
## NO. 1

*From the New York Times:*

J. George Bragin, a lawyer, who fled to Hollywood, Calif., two months ago and opened a liquor store, was lodged in the Tombs yesterday, in default of $10,000 bail, after he had pleaded not guilty before General Sessions Judge Freschi to the theft of $7,500 from a client.


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# MYTHS OF THE MARYLAND FREE STATE

*by* ***STEPHEN E. FITZGERALD***
*Editorial Staff, The Baltimore Evening Sun*

A REPUBLICAN politician mounted a platform in Maryland several years ago and earnestly harangued his audience about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. If elected, he solemnly announced, he intended to uphold the glorious principles set forth in the famous Act of Toleration passed by a Maryland Assembly in 1649. The audience was much impressed.

But I seriously doubt that the politician meant what he said. I doubt, moreover, that he had ever read the legislation to which he referred so gravely. Had he done so, he would certainly have discovered that the measure required strict Trinitarian Christianity of all Marylanders; he would have discovered that the act provided the death penalty for all blasphemers and for all persons who denied the divinity of any member of the Holy Trinity.

Thus the politician was publicly pledging himself to hang all the Jews in Maryland, all the Unitarians, and all those who entertained any doubts about the New Testament! Fortunately the Republicans lost that year.

Still, we must not censure the would-be office-holder too much. He was not alone in his ignorance. Belief that the Act of Toleration was a liberal measure still persists in Maryland; it is, in fact, one of the many groundless myths that have been revived by the Maryland Tercentenary celebration. Tom Paine could have been legally hanged in early Maryland under the terms of this act. Even the late Otto Kahn might have met the same fate had he publicly announced his credo. Such unpleasant possibilities, however, seem to have escaped public notice.

The popular misconception of the act stems from the phrase, "Act of Toleration", which is only a nickname. In the original Maryland records the act is described as an "Act Concerning Religion." As the Act of Toleration, however, it has become widely known; the profound implications of this nickname have resulted in extravagant praise by those who are totally uninformed as to the act itself. Many Marylanders sincerely believe that the act symbolized Cecil Calvert's benign philosophy. This is far from the truth. It is important to remember that religious liberty was established at the very first; that the Act Concerning Religion was a step backward; that Maryland today has still not regained the place in the sun that she held under Cecil Calvert during the first years of his régime.

But the lovely myth seems destined to persist. And with it will persist the dubious legends that surround George Calvert, the first Lord Baltimore. The popular idea is that George Calvert was an Irishman who dreamed of founding Maryland as a haven for persecuted Catholics. But—Calvert was not an Irishman. He was born in Yorkshire. And he did not envisage Maryland solely as a religious asylum. He had more practical motives.

The first Baron was a man full of the glory of the British Empire, full of ideas for colonial expansion. He demonstrated these interests by founding a colony in Newfoundland two years before he abandoned the Church of England for the Church of Rome. And years before that he had joined the Virginia Company, an indication that his colonial interests did not spring entirely from religious questions. Had the Newfoundland colony succeeded, in fact, Maryland might never have known the rule of the six Barons of Baltimore.

Calvert's reasons for abandoning Newfoundland are not esoteric; there is no excuse for a misunderstanding. The northern colony—as he himself said—was simply too cold, too dreary, too desolate. Naturally he sought a warmer climate; naturally he turned his eyes toward the South. And this is the real reason why Maryland was founded when it was—because the climate was agreeable. George Calvert's colonial ventures were partly caused by religious motives, but certainly not entirely so.

It would be unjust to say that religious liberty was not established under the Calvert rule. It would be equally unjust to say that the idea sprang full-fledged from the serene brow of Cecil Calvert, the second Lord Baltimore and the actual founder of the colony. Thomas More, a century before, had outlined a remarkably similar freedom in his "Utopia", and it was More's great-grandson, a Jesuit provincial, who acted as one of Cecil's closest advisers. Probably both men knew "Utopia" intimately; probably both were greatly influenced by the work.

But enough of history. What about Maryland today? Is it really a Free State? Sheer rhetoric. "Free State" is another nickname, and one of comparatively recent origin. It was during the late lamented Prohibition era that the famous Willie Upshaw, irritated by Maryland's great indifference to the Eighteenth Amendment, formally read the State out of the Union. Some amused Baltimorean suggested that Maryland set itself up as a Free State, following the example of Ireland. It was a popular suggestion; the name "Free State" stuck fast. But the term has nothing to do with any concepts of religious or civil liberty.

Civil liberty, in fact, is a blessing still in store for Marylanders. One striking example of this is the ban on civil marriages. An atheist cannot be married in Maryland unless he is willing to abandon his convictions and be married by a rabbi or by a minister of the Christian gospel. And a Buddhist, or any pagan, cannot be married in Maryland according to his own religious rites. Despite these restrictions, the Elkton marriage mart is permitted to run full-swing, and the marrying parsons are not molested as they grind out wedded couples in wholesale lots.

The more civilized residents of the State have made persistent efforts to force a civil marriage bill through the Legislature. But the wise solons at Annapolis apparently feel that God wants Christian marriages or Jewish marriages or none at all.

Belief in the Old Testament God is also a very necessary virtue in a prospective juror. The State Constitution liberally says that no person shall be deemed incompetent as a juror or witness because of his religious belief—"provided he believes in the existence of God, and that under His dispensation such person will be held morally accountable for his acts, and be rewarded or punished therefor in this world or the world to come." In other words, no person shall be given any religious test so long as he is religious!

The famous Maryland blue laws, although much modified a few years ago, are still sadly in evidence in all parts of the State. A baker cannot sell bread on Sunday. A drugstore which sells lemon-squeezers on Saturday cannot sell them on the Sabbath. A thirsty man can drink at any bar on week days, but on Sunday liquor is sold only in restaurants, and then only when the drinker agrees to sit at a table. A devout Jewish tailor, who knocks off on Saturday to worship his God, is lectured and fined by a magistrate if he presses a pair of trousers on Sunday. Or a Seventh Day Adventist, discovering that his back porch needs repairs, cannot attend to the chore without being haled into court by an Argus-eyed bluecoat.

Yet the picture is not entirely dark. The city fathers regulate the public's literary fodder, but there is no vice society to keep a reader from obtaining his alleged pornography at the bookstores. Gambling is rigidly suppressed—officially—yet horse-racing is under the State's auspices and even amateur bookmakers are not bothered too much by the cops. And the liberal Johns Hopkins University—once called a "breeding ground for atheism"—is not even molested by the Y. M. C. A. on its very campus.

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